

## **Update: Slow Transition to Civilian Rule in Chad Sparks International Concerns**

Chad's longtime president, Idriss Déby, was killed in battle two years ago and quickly replaced by his son, violating the line of succession laid out in the Central African country's constitution. Now, the U.S. government is struggling with the question of whether the ruling junta is too brutal and undemocratic to merit U.S. assistance, or whether the country's value as a military ally trumps those concerns.

"Supporting dictators and military strongmen while neglecting the majority of Chad's citizens is a disastrous policy," said Sen. Bob Menendez (D., N.J.), chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee. "The notion that investing more in the security sector will promote stability in Chad or the broader Sahel is deeply flawed."

The Biden administration chose not to declare the younger Déby's takeover of power after his father's death a coup d'état, arguing that Chad's speaker of parliament, who was next in the line of succession, had stepped aside voluntarily. Such a declaration by the administration would have triggered an automatic cutoff of U.S. security assistance, as happened after recent military uprisings in Mali, Burkina Faso and Guinea. Key members of Congress, especially Menendez, questioned the administration's call and saw events in Chad as a coup.

The senator's concerns grew in October when Chadian forces violently suppressed protests over, among other grievances, the junta's move to extend its own rule by two years instead of handing over power to civilians that month as promised. The government reported 35 civilians and 15 security officers killed, but Human Rights Watch, a nonprofit monitoring group, said the toll was likely higher.

### **Washington's Dilemma in Chad: Defense or Democracy?**

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/washingtons-dilemma-in-chad-defense-or-democracy-45b40573>

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<https://www.voanews.com/a/slow-transition-to-civilian-rule-in-chad-sparks-international-concerns/7138638.html>

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